

## **Cabinet**

**Meeting Date: 4 April 2024**

**Title: Food Safety Plan 2024-2027**

**Report of: Executive Director - Place**

**Cabinet Portfolio: Regulatory**

**Key Decision: No**

**Reasons for Urgency: N/A**

**Confidentiality: Non-Exempt**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To approve the Food Safety Plan 2024-2027.

### **Recommendation**

2. Cabinet is recommended to:
  - A. Approve the Food Safety Plan 2024-2027, and
  - B. authorise the Executive Director – Place to make minor alterations and typographical corrections to the document before publication.

### **Background**

3. The Council enforces food safety on approximately 700 premises, including restaurants, hotels, pubs, schools, shops, home caterers, and small businesses.

<b>Food hygiene rating</b>	<b>Meaning of hygiene rating</b>	<b>No. of premises</b>
<b>5</b>	Very Good	<b>471</b>
<b>4</b>	Good	<b>83</b>
<b>3</b>	Generally Satisfactory	<b>23</b>
<b>2</b>	Some Improvement Necessary	<b>5</b>
<b>1</b>	Major Improvement Necessary	<b>4</b>
<b>0</b>	Urgent Improvement Necessary	<b>0</b>

4. The figures in the table above do not include childminders and other businesses excluded from the risk rating scheme, such as military premises. 98% of premises are classed as 'broadly compliant' and have a food hygiene rating of 3 or above.
5. The Environmental Health team works with the food businesses to ensure they comply with legislation and adopt best practices to control the health risks that may be associated with food storage, preparation, processing, and

handling. In so doing, this helps to promote a high level of public confidence in the safety of food prepared, handled and sold, including by participating in the national food hygiene rating scheme: [www.food.gov.uk/ratings](http://www.food.gov.uk/ratings)

6. This new Food Safety Plan complies with the latest FSA's Food Law Code of Practice requirements.

### Main Issues

7. The aims of the Food Safety Plan are:
  - *to ensure that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is produced, stored, distributed, handled, or consumed within Hart district is without risk to the health or safety of the consumer,*
  - *to investigate suspected and confirmed food poisoning incidents, to locate the source of contamination and to prevent it spreading to protect the health of the public, and*
  - *to provide information and advice on food safety matters for business and members of the public.*
8. The Food Safety Plan 2024-2027 will run for three years until April 2027. When the new FSA's Food Business Delivery Model is published, the Food Safety Plan will be assessed to determine whether any updates are required.
9. The Council provides statutory data returns to the FSA on a 6 monthly basis. These returns directly scrutinise the Council's work against the code of practice.
10. The frequency of a food premises inspection is determined by the priority risk rating as set out in the Food Law Code of Practice. The inspection frequency profile is set out in the table below.

Premises Risk Category	Frequency of inspections	No. of premises	2024-2025
<b>A</b>	6 months	0	0
<b>B</b>	12 months	32	32
<b>C</b>	18 months	127	97
<b>D</b>	24 months	228	118
<b>E</b>	9 years	277	30
<b>New / unrated*</b>	-	27	80 (estimate)
Total	-	691	357

\*Unrated food businesses are those that have registered but are awaiting their first inspection.

11. The Environmental Health team is resourced to undertake around 340 annual inspections of food premises alongside their other work. It should be noted

that the risk category of premises can change depending on what is found on an inspection. The team will always focus the resources on those premises where there is the greatest risk.

15. Also, premises with a risk category rating of E (very low risk) will be asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire every 3 years. For 2024-2025, the target is 95 self-assessment questionnaires from category E food businesses.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

12. The alternative would be not to produce a Food Safety Plan 2024-27. This would open the Council to potential criticism from the FSA.

### **Corporate governance considerations**

#### **Relevance to Corporate Plan**

13. The Hart Corporate Plan 2023-2027 has three focus areas:
  - Planet - make all areas directly under the control of the Council carbon neutral by 2035 and make Hart a carbon neutral district by 2040,
  - People – fair treatment for all, help for those in need, and a sustainable economy that makes Hart a great place to live, work and enjoy, and
  - Place - delivering warmer, better homes in sustainable locations that people can afford to live in.

This will be underpinned by providing a resilient and financially sound Council.

#### **Service Plan**

- Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan? No
- Is the proposal being funded from current budgets? Yes
- Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal? Yes

#### **Legal and Constitutional Issues**

15. The Food Safety Plan seeks to meet the guidance and best practice requirements of the Food Law Code of Practice revised issue June 2023.
16. The Food Law Code of Practice (England) (the Code) is issued under Section 40(1) of The Food Safety Act 1990, Regulation 6(1) of The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009 and Regulation 26(1) of The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, which empower the Secretary of State to issue Codes of Practice concerning the execution and enforcement of that legislation by Competent Authorities.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

17. The Food Safety Plan is within the agreed budget for 2024/25 and the Environmental Health team can conduct 320 food premises inspections per year. Additional resources would be needed for any new or expanded work streams.

#### **Risk management**

18. If the Council does not adopt the 2024-2027 Food Safety Plan with clear targets and tasks aligned with its budget, it risks failing to deliver its objectives and priorities.

#### **Equalities**

19. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations.

## **Climate Change Implications**

20. The Food Safety Plan 2024-2027 recommendations will not significantly affect the environment. While inspections do require some car travel, the number of visits is not expected to increase, so the report's impact on climate change is neutral.

## **Action**

21. The Food Safety Plan 2024-2027 will be published and made available on the Council's website.
22. The Environmental Health team will implement the requirements of the Plan.

**Contact details:** Neil Hince, Environmental Health Manager

## **Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Food Safety Action Plan 2024-2027